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Identical letters dated 18 January 2016 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of the Syrian Arab Republic to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

On instructions from my Government, I wish to inform you of a bloody massacre of innocent civilians committed by the terrorist organization Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) in the Baghiliyah suburb in Dayr al-Zawr governorate.

On Saturday, 16 January 2016, ISIL gangs attacked the suburb of Baghiliyah. They broke into civilian homes and murdered innocent civilians using blades, guns and bombs. Over 280 civilians were killed, most of them old people, women and children. The terrorists also abducted some four hundred peaceful civilians from Baghiliyah, taking them to other districts.

This latest bloody massacre was one of a series of barbaric and systematic terrorist acts committed in Syria by armed terrorist groups backed by States in the region and beyond, which have recruited the terrorists to serve their own petty interests and geopolitical agendas in the region.

The Government of the Syrian Arab Republic stresses that ISIL and the other terrorist organizations could not have perpetrated these crimes and bloody massacres without ongoing backing in the form of weapons, materiel, funds and logistical support from the intelligence services of States involved in the shedding of Syrian blood, particularly Saudi Arabia, Qatar and Turkey. France, too, has played a destructive role: by making vacuous pronouncements demonizing the forces that are fighting terrorism, its diplomats have encouraged the commission of terrorist acts.

In view of the massacres and crimes committed by armed terrorist groups in Syria, including ISIL, the Nusrah Front, Army of Islam, the Islamic Front, the Army of Conquest, the Free Army, Ahrar al-Sham and associated terrorist organizations, the Security Council must take deterrent action against those States that support and fund transcontinental terrorism, which endangers security and peace in Syria and the world as a whole. The international community must assert its commitment to combating terrorism and extremist terrorist groups while avoiding politicization and double standards. In order to fight this dangerous scourge, it must cooperate and coordinate fully with the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic. It must support the Syrian Government, which is fighting terrorism on behalf of all peoples of the world and defending humanity and the values of justice, freedom and dignity against the dark forces of extremism, blind zealotry and destructive, obscurantist

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thought. These crimes are taking place in plain sight of the so-called coalition of American and other allied forces. At a time when the coalition's futility and hypocrisy have become clear to see, the Syrian Arab Army and the Russian air force are waging relentless war on the terrorists.

The Government of the Syrian Arab Republic stresses that the priority must be to combat terrorism in Syria. It is determined to continue fulfilling its duty to protect the Syrian people in accordance with its constitutional responsibility, and to repel any threat to its people's safety and security. Once again, it calls on the Security Council and the Secretary-General of the United Nations to condemn these crimes and terrorist acts. All members of the Security Council must assume their responsibility to eradicate terrorism and cut off its sources of funding. To that end, they must enforce the counter-terrorism resolutions of the Security Council, particularly resolutions 2170 (2014), 2178 (2014), 2199 (2015) and 2253 (2015). They must also take all necessary measures to deter those States, individuals, associations and institutions that are violating the aforementioned resolutions, especially the regimes in power in Turkey, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and certain Western States that continue to conspire against Syria.

I should be grateful if you would have the present letter issued as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Mounzer **Mounzer**
Minister Counsellor
Chargé d'affaires a.i.